

Mrs. Starbuck Plays the Children's Piano

Mrs. Starbuck plays the children's piano
at the toy counter in Kresge's, and no

one listens to her but me. Christmas carols
picked out with one forefinger, she unrolls

rhythmically down the keys. I watch Mrs.
Starbuck from the jewelry counter in this

penny world of tiepins and pearls of paste,
privy should Mr. Starbuck in his haste

discover me watching his skin-hugging-
jean-wearing wife. I am happy hearing

Mrs. Starbuck who will some day beget
memoirs of Mr. Starbuck, good poet

and teacher of good poets. I will say
that one day I heard Mrs. Starbuck play

the children's piano in Kresge's. Who'll
deny it? Who, in the weathering of this yule-

tide season, would cry humbug? Not Mr.
Starbuck who, returning, sees the warm blister

on his wife's finger. Not Mrs. Starbuck.
Leaving, I say, "Hello, Mr. Starbuck,"

smiling as I leave, and only to hear
toy Christmas carols jangling in my ear.

-- Harold Bond

Boston, Massachusetts

in wales in january in 1905

in wales in january in 1905 a large wolf slaving
having torn the throats from a thousand sheep cowering
turned into a donkey for the benefit of a watching
welshman wondering
no questions were asked of either man or donkey or
by them.

in oklahoma in july in 1965 a large lake surging
having housed for the summer the bodies of people
bathing
turned suddenly from blue to green for my benefit
i mention this
equally astounding observation coincidentally

in london in october in 1878 a naturalist walking
was followed at his heel by a cubeshaped animal silently
crowds of people of all shapes followed him to his
home crying
such words as best expressed their anger and fear

in oklahoma in july in 1965 a woman walking
was followed and preceded by a twolegged boy loudly
who
left the ground entirely in the air or became a
moving part of a tree
at irregular intervals i believe but i had no watch
to time them

and this morning the earth squeezed out of its rim
a yellow egg
and the air of the sky that i cannot hold turned into
water
and a strange black box of a machine makes black
marks on paper
out of weightless golden questions in my mind.

thursday evening

we all sat around in a circle
one said have you heard about
the two drowned russian astronauts in wisconsin
that the government refuses to take out of a lake

i said what lake in wisconsin
nobody knew

another said i read in the readers digest
about the two young boys in italy who have built
a radar tracking device out of tin cans thats better
than any the russian and american scientists have made

i said what are their names
nobody knew